

Market Development of Solar Rural Electrification

Experience of the Solar Electric Light Company

**Presented by
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Developing Confidence in PV Technology

People who are going to spend money on something new and expensive want to be sure it is absolutely reliable and will perform as advertised.

Solutions:

- Rural electrification service providers must have a local level marketplace presence
- Technicians must be well trained
- Demo systems can be used and local “solar pioneers” who can prove the reliability of the technology
- Electronic components (lights and charge controllers) must work and be reliable

Creating Awareness of Your Product and Services

This is called “marketing,” or in some countries “Information, Education and Communication (IEC)”

Solutions:

- Impose the “4 M’s”: Management and Marketing, Management and Marketing
- Train rural sales agents to sell something new like solar energy
- Organize a rural sales and marketing organization
- Build brand awareness

Dealing with the Government

Governments have created the “myth of electrification,” which is a belief that someday the government will bring a wire to a house or village. Private sector energy service providers must confront this myth.

Solutions:

- Promote privatization of power and work to provide wireless solutions like solar PV
- Accept that electricity is considered a public service and work to secure subsidies to help customers obtain it from private companies
- Make government owned power companies aware that *solar power is better than no power*

Establishing Consumer Financing Mechanisms

Companies need to organize third party financing through banks, co-ops, credit unions, government lending institutions, donor-based programs, or leasing companies.

Solutions:

- Sell with a third-party making a consumer loan
- Lease with an option to buy
- Operate a “fee for service” mini-utility
- New proprietary SELCO “utility model”